

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 810

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 11402

PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR IN

SUBJECT: PROGRESS OF SOUTHWEST MONSOON

REF: A) NEW DELHI 10770 B) STATE 199708

1. DURING THE TWO WEEK PERIOD ENDING AUGUST 20, ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF INDIAN WEATHER SUB-DIVISIONS REPORTED PRECIPITATION AS NORMAL OR ABOVE. FOR THE WEEK ENDING WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20, ASSAM AND ITS ADJOINING AREAS, NORTHERN PARTS OF WEST BENGAL AND BIHAR, UTTAR PRADESH, HARYANA, HIMACHAL PRADESH, SOUTHEAST MAHARASHTRA, NORTHWEST AND SOUTH WEST ANDHRA PRADESH, TAMIL NADU AND SOUTH INTERIOR KARNATAKA RECEIVED PRECIPITATION 20 PERCENT TO 80 PERCENT BELOW NORMAL.

2. CUMULATIVE RAINFALL FROM JUNE 1 THROUGH AUGUST 20, 1975 WAS NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY EXCEPT FOR ASSAM AND NORTH BIHAR WHERE IT WAS marginally DEFICIENT. THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE MONSOON THUS FAR HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER THAN IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF 1974. AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR 91 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION (USING AS A BASE THE DISTRIBUTION OF KHARIF CEREAL PRODUCTION DURING 1970-71) HAVE RECEIVED NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL DURING JUNE 1-AUGUST 20. DURING THE COMPARABLE PERIOD IN 1974,
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AREAS RECEIVING NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL ACCOUNTED FOR

62 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION.

3. FLOODING HAS CAUSED SOME CROP AND LIVESTOCK DAMAGE IN PARTS OF THE STATES OF PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN, EASTERN UTTAR PRADESH, BIHAR, ORISSA, AND ASSAM. ON THE OTHER HAND, SCATTERED REPORTS OF A NEED FOR RAIN IN SOME LOCALITIES ARE SURFACING. SUCH CONTRASTING DEVELOPMENTS ARE NOT SURPRISING IN THIS VAST COUNTRY WITH ITS ATTENDANT ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATIC DIVERSITIES. ON THE WHOLE, THIS HAS SO FAR BEEN A VERY FAVORABLE MONSOON, EVOKING PREDICTIONS BY SOME OFFICIALS AND OBSERVERS OF AGRICULTURAL SCENE THAT A NEW KHARIF CROP RECORD OF 69 MILLION METRIC TONS IS IN THE OFFING. TIMELY AND AMPLE RAINS IN SEPTEMBER, HOWEVER, WILL STILL BE AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE FINAL OUTCOME.

4. ABOVE REPORT WAS NOT PREPARED AS A SUBSTANTIVE REPLY TO REFERENCE BUT TO PROVIDE A COUNTRY WIDE REVIEW OF THE RAINFALL PICTURE. THE FLOODING OF THE LAST TWO OR THREE DAYS IN ORISSA IS LIMITED TO THE COASTAL AREAS. THROUGH AUGUST 6, PRECIPITATION FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE WAS BELOW NORMAL. EMBASSY IS CHECKING WITH CONGEN CALCUTTA FOR ANY FURTHER DETAILS ON SCOPE AND SEVERITY OF FLOODING. SAXBE

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